

LampLighter

29 Elul
Rosh Hashanah
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

There are many pressures on parents to make the education of their children conform to the prevailing modes of the secular world. If they resist the pressures and give their child an education with significant Jewish content, they will feel satisfied that they have fulfilled their obligation to ensure that their child learns Torah.

There might be a nagging doubt in the back of his mind that perhaps a better Torah education could have been provided, but on *Rosh Hashanah* they will feel justified in not being concerned with such matters, for every minute of *Rosh Hashanah* is precious.

The *haftorah* of Hannah, read on *Rosh Hashanah*, responds to this issue. In the *haftorah* we learn about Hannah's efforts to have a child, and her pain in being barren while her co-wife Peninah is fruitful. Peninah gave her children a Torah education, as we see from her taking them with her to *Shiloh*. Finally Hannah has a son. She not only gave her child a Torah education, but even dedicated her son to G-dly service. Hannah's approach, then, was to give her child the best education available.

This then is the central concept of the *haftorah*: a person shouldn't rest until another Jewish child is given the best Torah education. The fact that we read the *haftorah* before we blow the *shofar* demonstrates the priority of education - even over the most important mitzvah of Rosh Hashanah.

Does the education of one child deserve such emphasis?

There is also an answer to this in the *haftorah*: Hannah's child, Samuel, became a prophet. He anointed King David, thereby initiating the royal line from which will come *Mashiach* and therefore the ultimate redemption.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher rebbe)

One Chance

We Jews love to ask questions. For instance, as we read or listen to the news, a continuous murmuring of "Is it good for the Jews?" can be heard on our lips.

Have you heard the news? This year, the first day of Rosh Hashana falls on Shabbat. Is it good for the Jews?

Of course it is!

To explain: One year, when the first day of Rosh Hashana was on Shabbat, the famed Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev stood in the centre of his synagogue and cried out to the heavens:

"Master of the Universe, today, all Your creatures go before You like a flock of sheep, and You pass judgment upon them. Two great books lie open before You, the book of life and the book of death. The righteous are inscribed in the book of life, and the transgressors are written in the book of death, G-d forbid.

"But today is Shabbat. Did You not command in Your holy Torah that it is forbidden to write on Shabbat? True, it is permitted to violate Shabbat in order to preserve a life, so You are permitted to inscribe the righteous in the book of life. But no such clause permits inscribing those who have transgressed Your will in the book of death. I therefore inform You, dear Father in Heaven, that according to the law of the Torah, You must inscribe all Your children for a year of life, health and prosperity!"

So, it IS good for the Jews that the first day of Rosh Hashana occurs on Shabbat this year, for surely we will all be inscribed for a year of life, health and prosperity.

But, on the other hand, the main, ultra-special, utterly important and crucial commandment that all Jews must fulfil on Rosh Hashana - more important than eating apple dipped in honey (that's a custom), or brisket dripping in luscious gravy (well that's just delicious) - is to hear the shofar sounded on Rosh Hashana. And when Rosh Hashana occurs on Shabbat, the shofar is NOT sounded. So we only have one opportunity to hear the shofar sounded this year, on Sunday, the second day of Rosh Hashana.

Does that mean that it's not "good for the Jews?" Do we somehow lose out on the chance to be inspired by the shofar's message to "wake up from our slumber" and return to our essential Jewishness; to stand at attention as the shofar trumpets the announcement that G-d is the King of Kings? Are we not to hear the shofar blown, thereby fulfilling a mitzvah that connects us with our Jewish roots?

Rosh Hashanah without the shofar's wake-up call is still good for the Jews, because when Shabbat coincides with the first day of Rosh Hashana, this takes our service to an even higher level. On this sublime level the sounding of the Shofar is not even needed. So the purpose of the day is fulfilled even more completely,

In addition, it IS also good for the Jews because surely when G-d sees all of us making the effort - and going out of our way - to hear the shofar on Sunday and fulfil this mitzvah that we only have one chance of fulfilling this year, He will connect the sounding of the shofar in the tens of thousands of synagogues around the world to the sounding of the Great Shofar that will herald the era of international peace, pristine health and mind-altering Divine knowledge - the Era of Moshiach. That will be good not only for the Jews, it will be good for the entire world, let it happen now!



Beryl Vogel

By Tzvi Jacobs

The sweet aroma of honey cake and cookies for Rosh Hashana filled the air of Tzipporah's apartment. Tzipporah Vogel and her husband, Aaron Yoseph, lived with their seven children on President Street on the border of the Jewish section of Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

Outside, the school bus stopped across the street from the Vogel's apartment, and 8-year-old Beryl excitedly skipped off the bus, full of anticipation for the coming holiday.

Barely a minute passed when Tzipporah heard a rapid knock on the door. Her 7-year-old son, Levi, ran in, followed by a neighbor's daughter. "Beryl was hit by a car!" the girl shrieked. Tzipporah flew out toward the street.

A van had driven around the bus, disregarding its flashing red lights, and rammed right into little Beryl, smashing into his head. There were no visible, external signs of injury, but those who witnessed the accident knew that the boy had been seriously injured.

A large crowd of neighbours stood in the middle of the street. Tzipporah darted straight through the crowd and saw her son on the ground.

"Beryleh, Beryleh, it's Mama. Beryleh, Mommy is here," Tzipporah said, as she leaned on the ground next to her son.

No response. "Beryleh, can you hear me? Beryleh," his mother kept repeating. Someone held her back from holding her son. "Don't touch him," warned a number of people. "Hatzalah (the Jewish volunteer ambulance) is on the way."

The police and ambulance arrived two minutes after Tzipporah. The medics paged the City Ambulance to bring spinal equipment to move Beryl.

Aaron Yoseph arrived moments later. As he reached the scene, Beryl was being set onto a stretcher. Before leaving with the ambulance, Tzipporah asked a neighbour to make sure someone would call the Rebbe's office. The woman answered that some one had already spoken to one of the Rebbe's secretaries.

"Beryleh, the Rebbe is praying for you. Now I know you're in good hands,"

Tzipporah said.

People in the Rebbe's shul were already saying Psalms for Beryl as the ambulance sped to Kings County Hospital, about fifteen blocks away. In the emergency room, Tzipporah continued to repeat her son's name in his ear.

"Okay," Beryl finally responded.

"What hurts you, Beryleh?" Tzipporah asked.

"Ich veis nit (I don't know)," he said, and then slipped back into unconsciousness.

Doctors rushed in and took over, sending Tzipporah out. The corridors of the hospital quickly filled with friends and relatives.

In the emergency room, the unconscious boy was X-rayed and checked.

Amazingly, Beryl suffered only one broken bone—a rib. However, the CAT-scan revealed a small fracture on the skull and internal bleeding and bruises on the brain. Neurologists were called down to diagnose the severity of the injury. Tubes were inserted into his lungs to keep him breathing, electrodes were taped to his chest to record his heartbeat, and a bolt was drilled into his skull to monitor the pressure on the brain. Even one small bruise on the brain could be fatal if the swelling increased, especially in a child. The doctors were also very concerned about the blood clot expanding.

Beryl was heavily sedated to ensure that he would not move around. The amount of pressure (measured in HUs) on the brain was elevated, fluctuating in the 20s. Anything above 20 HU was very serious. The parents watched the numbers, not knowing which way they would go.

The following day, Wednesday, was the eve of Rosh Hashana. Almost all the Jewish doctors were taking off for Rosh Hashana and a long weekend. Many of them said they would say special prayers in their synagogues for Beryl. There was little else the doctors could do; it was clear to all that everything was in G-d's hands.

On the eve of Rosh Hashana, when parents and children customarily call to wish each other a good, sweet year, the news was passed around — literally all over the world — to pray for Beryl ben Tzipporah.

On Thursday — the first day of Rosh Hashana — Beryl developed pneumonia. In such a weakened state, pneumonia was life-threatening, and the doctors kept trying different medications to fight it. The battle was wearing down little Beryl.

A family member reported each new development to the Rebbe. Aaron Yoseph and his wife watched the brain pressure monitor. Towards the end of the first day of Rosh Hashana — two days after the accident — the

pressure seemed to be steadily going down. A CAT-scan on Friday revealed that the bleeding in the brain had stopped. The doctor instructed the nurses to stop giving Beryl sedatives, unscrewed the monitor mounted on Beryl's skull, and removed the machinery from his lungs and mouth. Immediately, Beryl wiggled his head and his torso. Within a minute, he slowly opened his eyes.

"Good Yom Tov, Beryleh," said Tzipporah, with tears in her eyes. "It's Rosh Hashana."

Tzipporah started softly singing the Rosh Hashana prayer "Avinu Malkeinu." "Avinu Malkeinu Chatanu Lefanecha — Our Father, Our King, we have sinned before You..."

"Mama, on Rosh Hashana, you don't say 'Chatanu Lefanecha,'" Beryl said.

Tears of joy and relief flowed from Tzipporah's eyes: Beryl's mind was as sharp as ever. Beryl saw the tzedaka box and picture of the Rebbe that his parents had put in the room. He smiled.

"Mama, can I hear the shofar?" Beryl asked.

"Aaron Yoseph, Beryleh wants to hear the shofar!" Tzipporah cried out.

Aaron Yoseph came into Beryl's room and softly blew the shofar for his son with all his heart and soul.

On Saturday afternoon, Dr. Sherman, the resident who had conscientiously worked with Beryl from the very beginning, reported to Tzipporah, "Your son still has an elevated temperature." Then, with an uncharacteristic smile, he added, "But he's recovering very quickly."

That night, Tzipporah spoke again to Dr. Sherman about Beryl's condition. "You know your son is very, very lucky," he said. He was silent for a moment and then hesitatingly asked, "Have you been in touch with Rabbi Schneerson?"

"The Rebbe? Of course. The family has been in touch with the Rebbe from the very beginning," she said. Then, with a serious look added, "Doctor, we all pray to G-d and He hears everyone's prayers, but the Rebbe's prayers are heard and answered."

On Tuesday, only one week after the accident, Beryl dressed himself. His shoes, which were brand new before the accident, made him realize how lucky he was: the sole of his left shoe was rubbed paper thin by the accident. The hospital released Beryl and his father drove him home.

While Aaron Yoseph was helping his son out of the car, Beryl said, "It feels like I'm now finishing crossing the street."

"And I," said Tzipporah, "Feel like I'm coming home from the hospital with a newborn child."

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ISSUE 896

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The shofar foreshadows the jubilant proclamation of freedom, when Israel's exiled and homeless are to return to the Holy Land. It calls us to believe in Israel's deliverance at all times and under all circumstances.

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



A Healthy Nerve-Center for the Coming Year

*The First Day of Selichos,
5710 [1950]
Brooklyn, N.Y.*

It is explained in various sources in *Chassidus* that Rosh HaShana is called the head of the year rather than the beginning of the year, because its relation to the other days of the year parallels the relation of the head to the torso and the other organs. Just as the vitality of all the organs is subsumed in the head, and this then finds overt expression in the fact that the vitality of every particular organ derives from the head; so, too, Rosh HaShana comprises within itself the vitality of all the days of the forthcoming year: they are all subsumed in it in potential form, and eventually their vitality separates out overtly into individual days.

It may be assumed that this is one of the reasons for the fact that we have been earnestly urged to be exceedingly vigilant in husbanding time on Rosh HaShana - for the hours and the minutes of these days are comprehensive; they are superior to those of the rest of the year not only in quantity, but also in quality; like the brain tissue in comparison with the other physical organs.

A man is healthy when the vitality centred in his head is intact, and channelled to each organ according to its nature. The same is true of the *avodah* [service] of Rosh HaShana. These days should match their content, as the head of the entire year. Moreover, they should be connected with the ensuing days of the year, imbuing them with vitality in the acceptance of G-d's sovereignty, in the study of Torah and in the fulfillment of the *mitzvos*.

One of the aids to *avodah* in general, and in particular to the *avodah* of connecting Rosh HaShana with the following days of the year, is - being connected with the head of the myriads of Israel, whose soul is like a head and a brain relative to the souls of his contemporaries: through him they derive their nurture and vitality, and through him they are bound and unified with their original essence and root.

This is the case with the *hiskashrus* [connection] of every man and woman amongst us with the *Nasi* and head of our generation, namely, my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz], (May I serve as atonement for his resting place!). As he has stated clearly, *hiskashrus* is attained by studying his teachings, and by walking in a straight path, one of the paths he has shown us. It is this *hiskashrus* that will promote the *avodah* of the days of Rosh HaShana and their connection with the rest of the days of the year.

This will constitute the conduit through which people will be inscribed and sealed for a good year, with good that is visible and manifest, both materially and spiritually - during the days of Rosh HaShana and throughout the entire year.

A WORD from the Director

With the High Holydays upon us, it is time to take stock of the year that was and to look forward to the coming year.

Individually, each person will assess their own triumphs and disappointments and make resolutions for the future. But as a community, who will be the arbiter of what was and what will be?

A local community is no more than its constituent individuals, and Am Yisrael - world Jewry - no more than the communities of which it is comprised. Here in Melbourne, where do we stand on both levels?

May I suggest that we have plenty to be proud of on both counts, but at the same time, plenty more to strive for. As a community we have vibrant organizations, shules, schools and a multitude of service facilities. But at the same time, we have thousands of children bereft of any formal Jewish education, families whose Jewish involvement is a three day a year experience and rising incidents of family poverty and isolation.

On a world scale, Melbourne Jewry is not immune to increasing Jewish apathy and the threat of assimilation. The centrality of Israel in our lives is being eroded by media sentiment and bias, and our one time friends are beginning to distance themselves from the Jewish cause.

So where to 5770?

Chassidus teaches that "man is a small world" and that a single act by a single person can alter the world. Let us unite in our efforts to bring goodness and G-dliness into our world by taking on that one additional mitzvah, that one extra act of kindness that will make a difference to the life of a fellow human being. And through this, better ourselves, our community and indeed the world.

Over the next few weeks of Chagim, resolve to experience the joys and richness of Judaism in its fullness. If you do not have a regular Shule to attend, we warmly welcome you to our Chabad House in Caulfield, or feel free to drop in to any Chabad House in Melbourne whose doors will always be wide open to you.

On behalf of all at the Chabad House of Caulfield, I wish you a Shana Tovah - a year of goodness, health, prosperity and peace and tranquility in our Holy Land.

J. I. Gutnick

The special foods eaten during Rosh Hashanah are all symbolic. The most well-known is an apple dipped in honey at the beginning of the Rosh Hashanah meal. Before eating the apple we recite the blessing for fruit and then the following special prayer: "Yehi Ratzon Milfanecha She'Techadeish Aleinu Shanah Tovah U'Metukah" ("May it be Your will that a good and sweet year be renewed for us").

We dip Challah into honey for the same reason. Furthermore, there is a custom to eat round challas, sometimes with raisins to increase the sweetness. The idea of something round is that of completeness. We want our year to be wholesome, round and sweet.

The Talmud tells us that "even the wicked amongst Israel are as filled with good deeds as a pomegranate [is filled with seeds]." On Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment, we eat a pomegranate to remind G-d of all the good deeds we've done in the past year.

On the first night of Rosh Hashanah it is customary to place on the table the head of either a fish or a lamb. The head represents (the head of the New Year and) our aspiration to always

be leading with our head, as opposed to our hearts. We say in the blessing that we be as the "head and not the tail."

People also eat fish during the meal since fish represent multiplicity and we ask to be blessed to have children as numerous as the fish in the sea. Fish are only able to survive in water. Water is also an allusion to Torah which is called the "living waters." Therefore, while we eat fish we are reminded that we too should live through the Torah. As fish never close their eyes, so our eyes should also always be open to the miracles that surround us.

On the second night of Rosh Hashanah it is customary to eat a "new fruit", a fruit we haven't eaten yet that season. In addition to the symbolism of "new", the new fruit is necessary for reasons involving Jewish law and the history of calculation of the calendar.

CUSTOMS CORNER

It Happened Once...



Reb Shmuel was a beloved Chasid of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chasidism. Though known for his humour and wit, Reb Shmuel was no empty joker. He was a very deep personality, who loathed falsehood and whose ego was so nullified that he lived only to do the will of his Creator.

During the month of Elul, a maggid (traveling preacher) came to his town. The townspeople saw the maggid's letter of introduction which referred to him as a great tzadik (righteous person), who travelled from town to town only to arouse and inspire Jews. Being G-d-fearing people, they immediately invited him to speak and inspire them to serve G-d better.

The maggid began his speech. Over and over again, he accused his audience of committing terrible sins. His entire speech was filled with accusations and descriptions of the terrible punishments awaiting them because their evil behaviour had aroused G-d's anger. Only if they would wholeheartedly repent would they possibly have a chance to be spared. The townspeople were utterly broken by the maggid's harsh words, and they cried bitterly, fearing the awesome punishment.

After his speech, the maggid, satisfied with himself, retired to his room.

A short while later Reb Shmuel entered the maggid's room. He carried with him a long knife and a sharpening stone. Reb Shmuel closed and bolted the door behind him. Without saying a word, he began sharpening his knife.

A few tense moments passed. Finally the maggid broke the silence and asked in astonishment, "Please tell me what you are doing?"

Without glancing up from the knife, Reb Shmuel answered, "As the honourable, great maggid knows, we are very simple people in this town. Perhaps, it is because of our unintentional sins that we have never merited to have a great, righteous, G-d-fearing scholar in our midst."

"We were taught by our parents that before Rosh Hashana, one is supposed to pray at the graves of the righteous."

Still unsure of what Reb Shmuel's point was, the maggid asked, "That is correct. But why are you sharpening that knife?"

"Oh, that is very simple," explained Reb Shmuel. "The nearest grave site of a righteous person is very far from our town. For some of us it is extremely troublesome and difficult to make such a long journey."

With these additional words, the maggid began to feel uneasy. He started sweating and ventured, "But you still have not explained why you are sharpening your knife in this room!"

Reb Shmuel answered, "Quite simply, I am sharpening my knife here because the townspeople want a very righteous person buried in this town."

Now the maggid had not even a shadow of a doubt as to what Reb Shmuel's intentions were. The maggid stammered, "But I am not completely righteous. I have also done some small sins, such as ..."

Reb Shmuel dismissed the maggid's revelation, saying, "Honoured maggid, you are still a very righteous and learned person. As for the sins that you mentioned, I did not even know that they were transgressions."

The maggid trembled and stuttered, "But I did some transgressions that were much more serious, such as ..."

Concerning this revelation, as well, Reb Shmuel shrugged, arguing, "But to us you are still a Tzadik; for us, you are quite good enough."

This strange dialogue continued for some time with the maggid, mentioning more and more severe transgressions and Reb Shmuel telling him, "But you are still acceptable to us, since you are far better than we are."

Finally, the maggid admitted to some extremely serious transgressions and that he was not really the great Tzadik that his letter of introduction and credentials claimed him to be. In essence, he was saying, "I am an impostor."

Now, Reb Shmuel no longer played the simpleton. After putting away the knife, he began chastising the maggid for causing the Jews of the town so much pain and sorrow. After making sure the maggid fully understood how one is to talk to and treat another Jew, Reb Shmuel unbolted the door and let the maggid go on his way, much the wiser and more sensitive than before.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

The literal translation of Rosh Hashana is "head of the year." Just as the head affects the rest of the body, so too does Rosh Hashana affect the rest of the year. On Rosh Hashana we resolve to better ourselves in the coming year. Also, the service of Rosh Hashana revolves around recognizing the sovereignty of G-d, which establishes an even deeper connection between man and G-d that is carried over throughout the year. (*Likutei Sichot*)

An analogy is given to explain the sounding of the shofar on Rosh Hashana: There was once a king who sent his only son to a distant land to learn about its peoples and customs. As time passed, the prince's royal garb became faded and torn, and he even forgot how to speak his native tongue. One day the prince heard that his father, the king, would be visiting the region. "How will I be able to approach him?" he thought to himself. "My clothes are torn, and I cannot speak the language." The son decided that he would simply call out to his father in a cry without words, emanating from the heart, which the king would surely recognize. This is the call of the shofar, which appeals to the King's very Essence. (*The Baal Shem Tov*)

G-d is bound by His own statute, as it were, to forgive the Jewish people their sins. It is a law that cannot be abrogated. (*Nahar Shalom*)

The shofar as a wake-up call

The shofar is sounded on Rosh Hashana because it is an explicit commandment in the Torah. Nonetheless, it seems to convey a hidden message: "Wake up from your slumber!" it arouses us. "Return to G-d and remember your Creator! To those who forget the truth and waste most of the year in frivolity and foolishness look into your souls, improve your behaviour, and correct your negative ways." (*Maimonides*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

ROSH HASHANAH

1-2 TISHREI • 19-20 SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT: CANDLE LIGHTING: 5:54 PM
MINCHA: 6:05 PM
KABBOLAS SHABBOS-MAARIV: 6:35 PM

SHABBOS MORNING 19 SEPTEMBER - 1ST DAY ROSH HASHANAH:
SHACHARIS: 9:00 AM
MINCHA: 5:50 PM
MAARIV: 7:00 PM
LIGHT CANDLES AFTER: 6:52 PM

SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER - 2ND DAY ROSH HASHANAH:
SHACHARIS: 9:00 AM
SHOFAR BLOWING: 11:30 AM (APPROX)
A CHILD MINDING FACILITY WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM 10:00 AM
MINCHA: 5:50 PM
TASHLICH: 6:00 PM AT KIMBERLY
YOM TOV ENDS: 6:53 PM

MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER - 3 TISHREI - FAST OF GEDALIAH
FAST BEGINS 4:54 AM
SHACHARIS: 9:15 AM
MINCHA: 5:45 PM
FAST ENDS: 6:41 PM

WEEKDAYS: SHACHARIS: SUN: 9:00 AM
MON-FRI: 9:15 AM
MINCHA: 6:05 PM
MAARIV: 6:55 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 18, 19 SEPTEMBER 2009



18th	19th	ENDS
5:54 ... 6:52	MELBOURNE	6:53
5:50 ... 6:46	ADELAIDE	6:47
5:24 ... 6:17	BRISBANE	6:17
6:25 ... 7:14	DARWIN	7:14
5:22 ... 6:19	GOLD COAST	6:16
5:52 ... 6:47	PERTH	6:47
5:30 ... 6:25	SYDNEY	6:26
5:46 ... 6:47	LAUNCESTON	6:48
5:55 ... 6:52	AUCKLAND	6:53
5:54 ... 6:54	WELLINGTON	6:55
5:38 ... 6:34	CANBERRA	6:35

For the 18th of Sep. one should not light after the given times. For the 19th one should light after the given time, and from a pre-existing flame only.

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

זצוקללה"ה נב"מ זי"ע

May he succeed in imploring the Almighty to redeem His people speedily in our days.